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UNCLAS ANKARA 006802

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NP/NE FOR ALLEN KRASS  
USDOE/NA-212 FOR JILL ZUBAREV

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ENRG](#) [KNNP](#) [TRGY](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: CEKMECE REACTOR CONVERSION AND FUEL RETURN

REF: STATE 250990

1. EXBS Advisor and energy officer met with Turkish Atomic Energy Authority (TAEK) President Okay Cakiroglu on December 3 to discuss the Cekmece reactors and the possible early return of Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) fuel rods (ref A). Cakiroglu did not believe that there would be any GOT objection to the early return of the unused HEU fuel rods in Turkey's possession; however, Turkey has only one unused HEU fuel rod. All other HEU fuel rods in Turkey's possession are either currently in use or in the process of cooling. The HEU rods which are still in the reactor core are considered "hot" rods. These rods are not fully spent, thus are not ready for removal from the core. The cooling process that the other rods are in could take up to 2 years to reach a level permitting shipment. Turkey is on schedule to safely return their inventory of both used and unused HEU rods as previously planned. While Cakiroglu did not object to considering the possible early return of the unused rod, he was not sure that it would be cost-effective for the U.S. to come to Turkey to pick up only one rod. If Turkey were to return the rod to the U.S., it would appreciate assistance in obtaining replacement LEU fuel rods.

2. Cakiroglu said he would not object to a visit of a technical team to Turkey, but given that Turkey only has one remaining unused HEU rod for transfer, he did not see the benefit of a DOE visit at this time.

3. During their discussion Cakiroglu informed EMBOFs that an IAEA inspection team was currently in Ankara and Istanbul conducting a surprise accounting and inspection on the Turkish program. So far no discrepancies have been reported to him and he did not anticipate any problems.

EDELMAN